AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (cancelled)

2. (currently amended) An isolated biologically active mammalian IPAS polypeptide encoded by a polynucleotide molecule having at least 90% sequence homology with a sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

~~(a) a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO: 2;~~

~~(b) a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is capable of hybridizing, under stringent hybridization conditions, with a nucleotide sequence complementary to the polypeptide coding region of a nucleic acid molecule as defined in (a), and which codes for a biologically active mammalian IPAS polypeptide or a functionally equivalent modified form thereof; and~~

~~(c) a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence which is degenerate as a result of the genetic code to a nucleotide sequence as defined in (a) or (b) and which codes for a biologically active mammalian IPAS polypeptide or a functionally equivalent modified form thereof.~~

3. (currently amended) ~~The~~ An isolated mammalian IPAS polypeptide ~~according to claim 2 having~~ comprising an amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO: 3. ~~in the Sequence Listing~~

4-21. (cancelled)

22. (new) The isolated mammalian IPAS polypeptide according to claim 2, wherein the polynucleotide molecule having at least 95% sequence homology with a sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

23. (new) An isolated biologically active mammalian IPAS polypeptide having at least 90% sequence homology with SEQ ID NO: 3.

24. (new) The isolated mammalian IPAS polypeptide according to claim 23, wherein the sequence homology is at least 95%.